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Translating Yūgen 幽玄

Invited talk

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Recommended citation(APA):
Chen, Y. (2017). *Translating Yūgen 幽玄: Invited talk*. Conference on Japanese Philosophy: Sourcebooks for Teaching and Research , Hong Kong, China.

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Yūgen 和幽玄

陳怡，澳大利亞邦德大學

I. Sushimoto: tasting *yūgen*

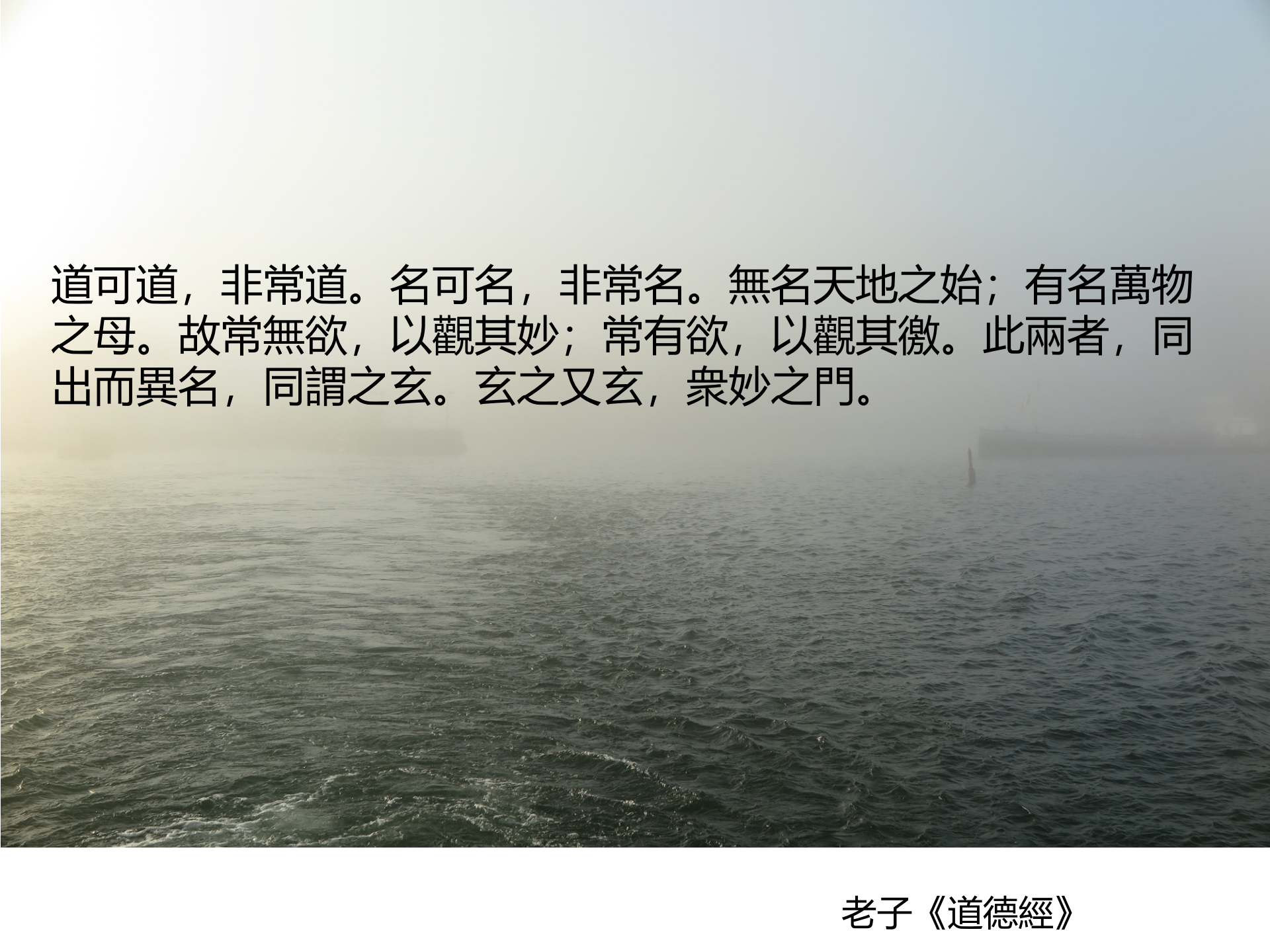


“Kaut man dagegen ein Sushi aus den Händen von Herrn Sakamoto, dann zerfällt der Reis sofort in lauter Körner. Man kann sie einzeln mit der Zunge ertasten.”
(Volker Zastrowin, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*)



II. 幽玄



The background of the slide is a photograph of a vast body of water, likely the ocean, under a hazy, overcast sky. The water is dark with small, choppy waves. In the far distance, a faint silhouette of a ship is visible on the horizon. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

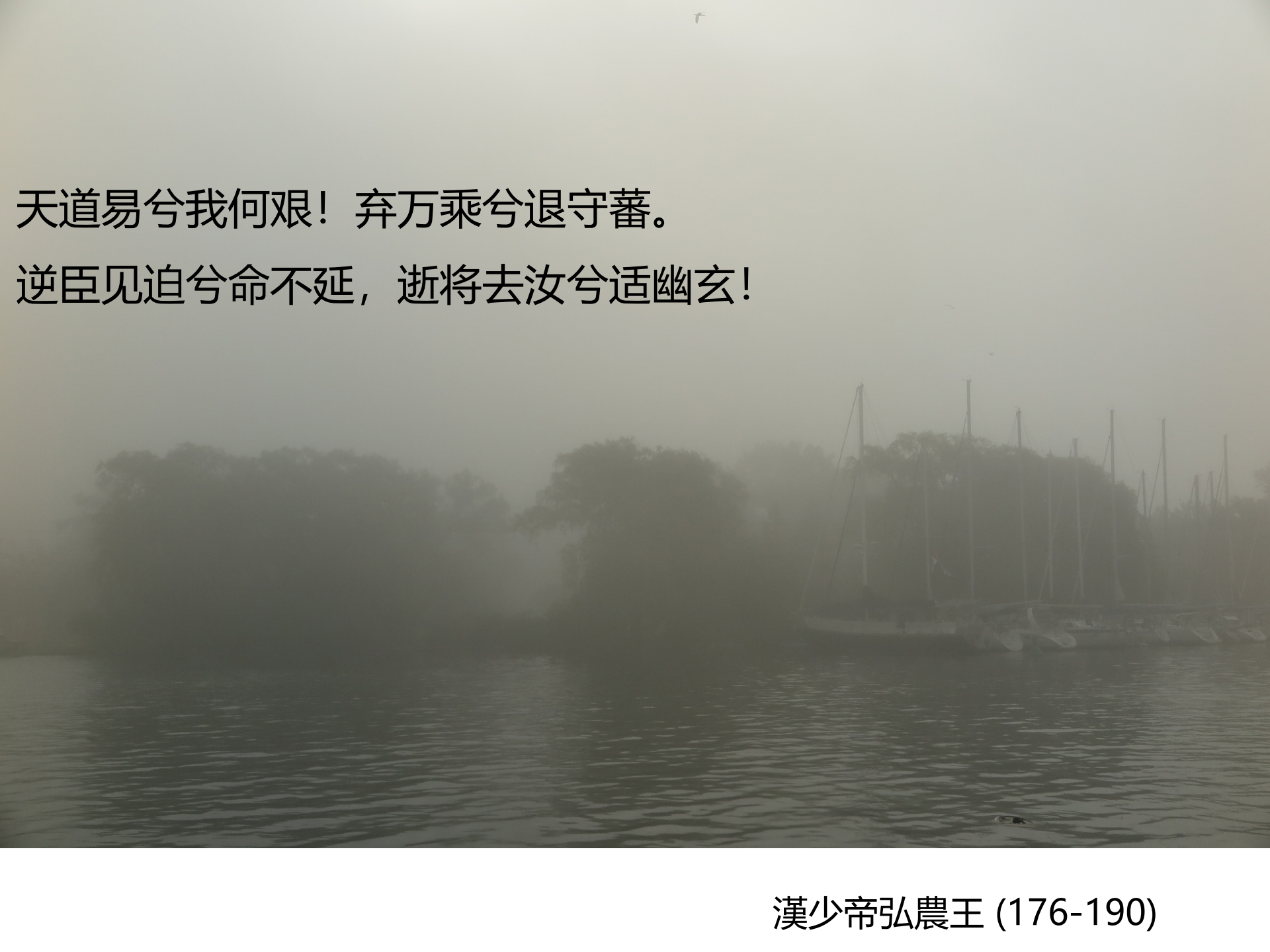
道可道，非常道。名可名，非常名。無名天地之始；有名萬物之母。故常無欲，以觀其妙；常有欲，以觀其徼。此兩者，同出而異名，同謂之玄。玄之又玄，衆妙之門。

或曰：「昆侖旁薄，幽。」何為也？曰：賢人天地，思而包群類也。昆諸中未形乎外，獨居而樂，獨思而憂，樂不可堪，憂不可勝，故曰「幽」。「神戰于玄」，何為也？曰：小人之心雜，將形乎外，陳陰陽以戰其吉凶者也。陽以戰乎吉，陰以戰乎凶。風而識虎，雲而知龍。賢人作，而萬類同。



揚雄(53-18BCE)

《太玄經玄文》

The background image is a sepia-toned photograph of a river scene. On the right side, a line of traditional Chinese sailing boats, known as junks, are moored. They have multiple masts and are partially obscured by a thick mist or fog that fills the upper half of the image. The left bank is covered in dense, dark foliage. The water in the foreground shows gentle ripples.

天道易兮我何艰！弃万乘兮退守蕃。
逆臣见迫兮命不延，逝将去汝兮适幽玄！

漢少帝弘農王 (176-190)

III. *Yūgen* 幽玄: An Interest





“Whether highborn lady or maidservant, man or woman, priest or layman, bumpkin or lout, even beggar or pariah, they should, every one, be made to appear as if they were carrying a spray of blossoms. They should elicit acclaim: “What beautiful blossoms,” no matter the difference in their social stations, for the flower of performance is the same for everyone.”
(Zeami Motokiyo, *Source Book*: 1211)

The Style of Calm Flower



The Style of Infinitely Deep Flower



The Style of Mysterious Flower





Someone once asked, “What is the essence of impermanence?” The answer: “The scattering of blossoms, the falling of leaves.”

Again, he asked, “What is eternal and incorruptible?” The answer: “The scattering of blossoms, the falling of leaves, and so on and so on.”

There is no fixed intent in the spontaneous visual perception of interest. Nevertheless, what provokes interest is regarded as evidence of skill in all the arts, and one who has long-term control over such **interest** is called an accomplished master of great repute.

Zeami Motokiyo, *Source Book*:
1210

Imitation



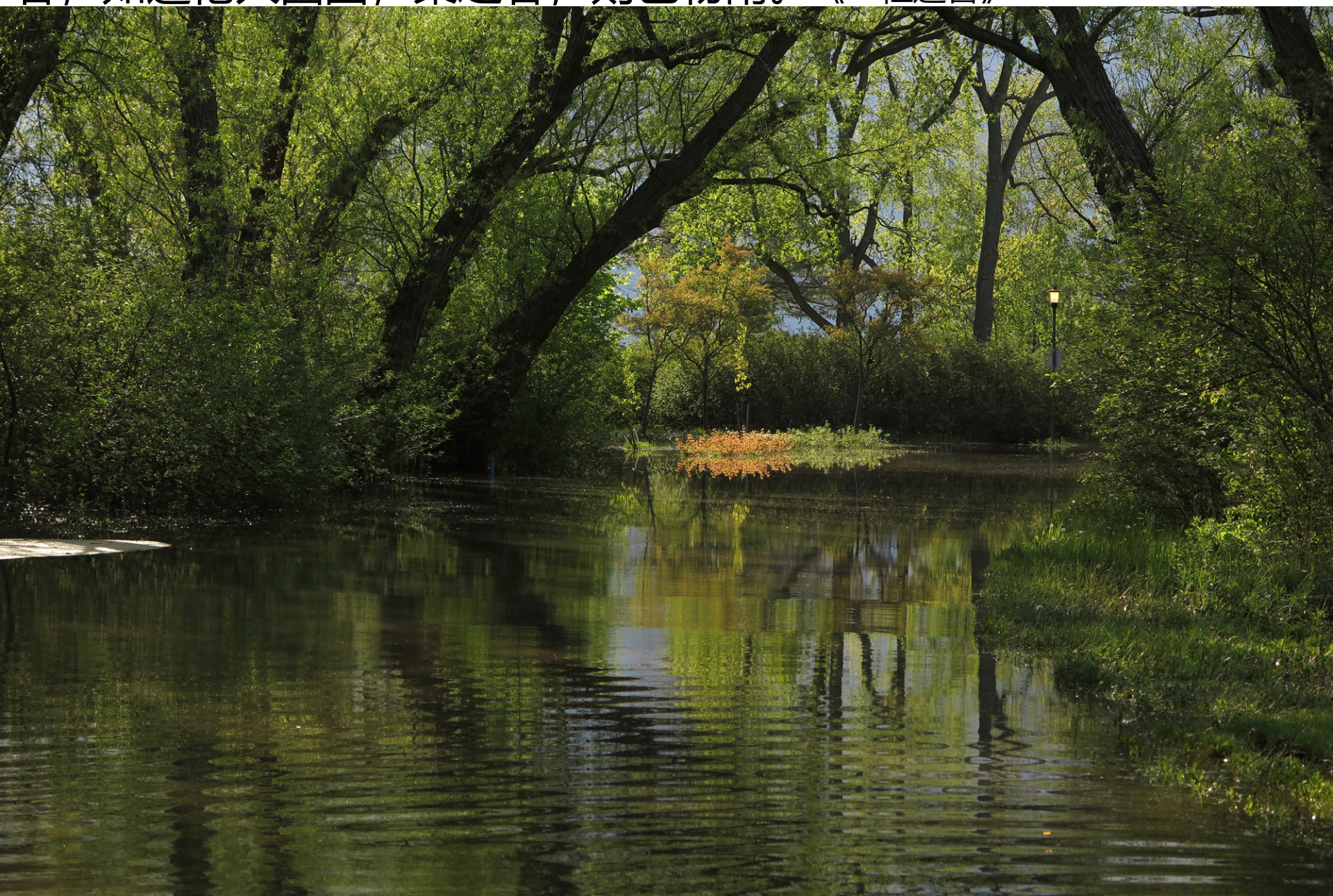
Time



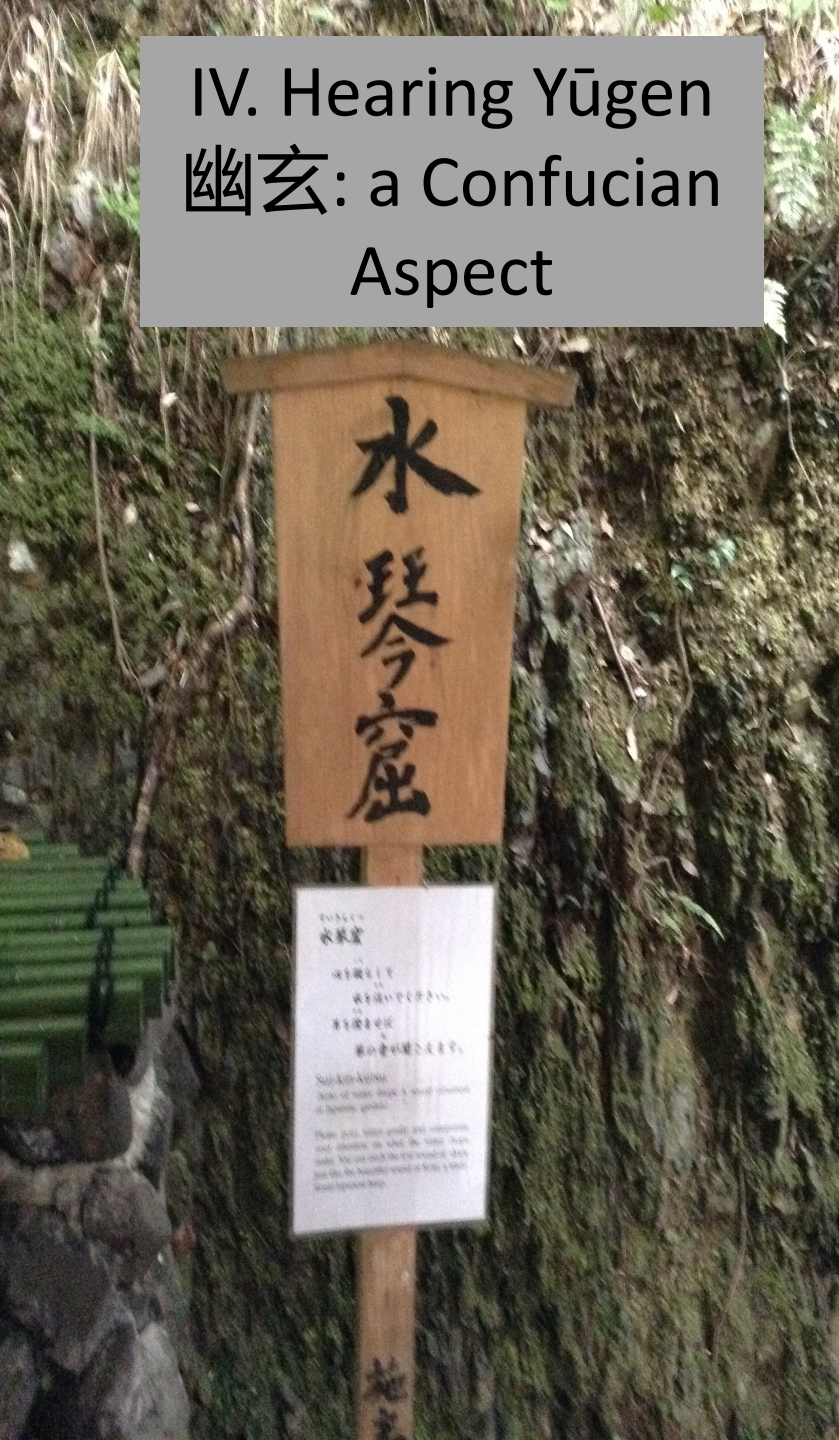
學而時習之，不亦說乎？有朋自遠方來，不亦樂乎？
人不知而不慍，不亦君子乎？

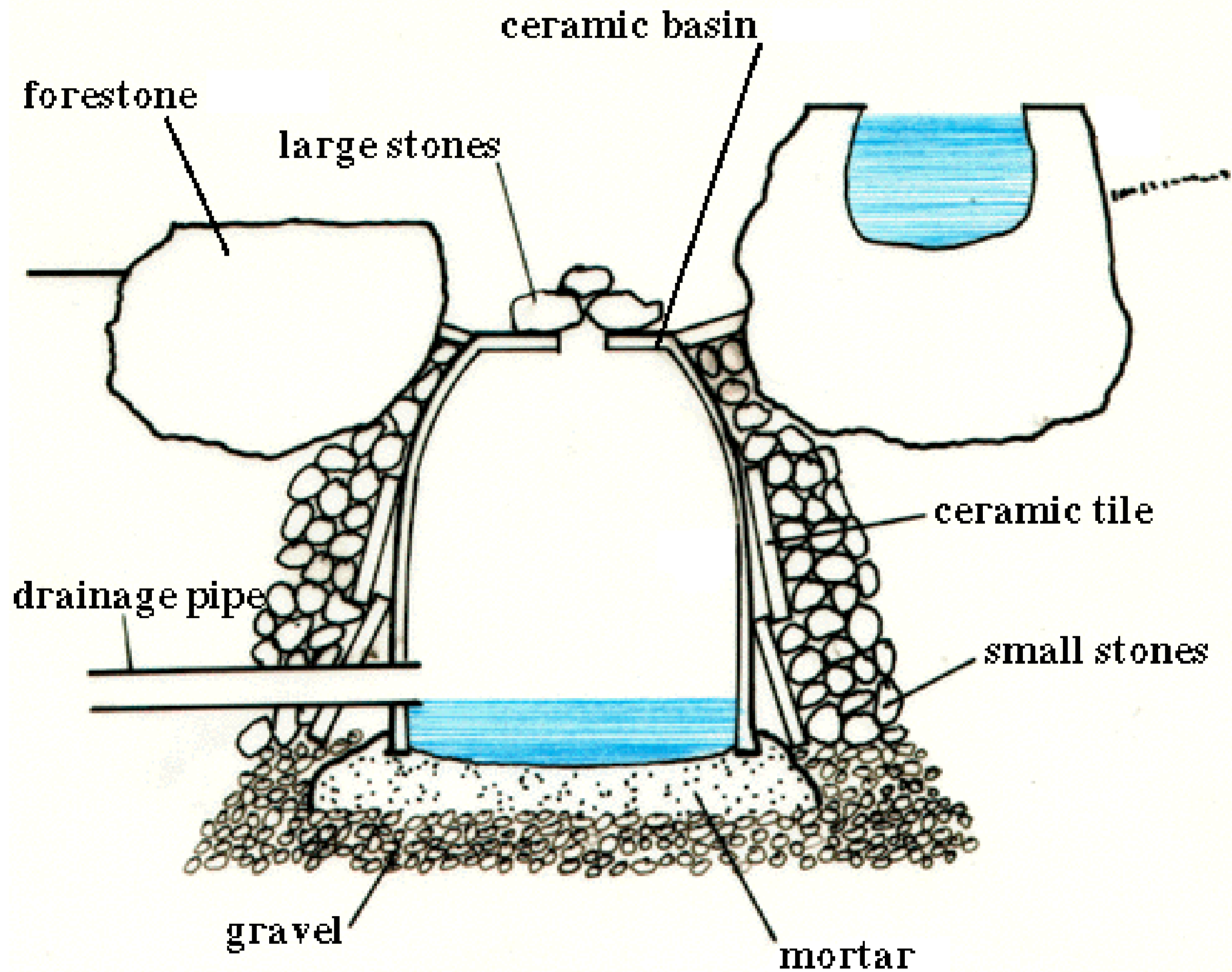


學至於樂則成矣。篤信好學，未如自得之為樂（造道者也）。好之者，如遊佗人園圃；樂之者，則己物爾。《二程遺書》 11: 77



IV. Hearing Yūgen 幽玄: a Confucian Aspect





問渠哪得清如許
為有源頭活水來



朱熹《活水亭觀書有感：其一》



謝謝！



Yūgen 和幽玄

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